

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-04 INR-05

LAB-01 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 NIC-01 SCCT-01 AID-05

PC-04 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 L-01 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-04 CU-02 OC-01 CCO-00 CIEP-01

DOT-00 SY-04 OPR-01 A-01 DRC-01 /089 W

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R 180759Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1528

AMCONSUL ASMARA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

ZNE/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM POUCH

AMEMBASSY LONDON POUCH

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO POUCH

AMEMBASSY PARIS POUCH

USCINCEUR POUCH

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E.O.11652: NA

TAGS: ELAB PINT ET

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SUMMARY. ETHIOPIAN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS PROCESSES APPEAR TO BE
DETERIORATING IN FACE OF UNRULY BEHAVIOR AMONG UNEMPLOYED WORKERS
AND DIMINISHING EFFECTIVENESS OF TRIPARTITE STRUCTURE. UGLY
INCIDENTS OCCUR ALMOST DAILY AT LABOR RELATIONS BOARD'S
HEADQUARTERS. EMPLOYERS' FEDERATION EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER
LACK OF DISCIPLINE AND WIDESPREAD CONFUSION OVER WHO REPRESENTS
WHOM. MEANWHILE, CELU EXPERIENCING INTERNAL POWER STRUGGLE AS
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COMMITTEE OF DISSIDENTS IN ADDIS CHALLENGING CURRENT LEADERSHIP

BY ALEM AND TESFA. OLD RIVALRIES AND JEALOUSIES REAPPEARING. POSSIBLE ALSO THAT AFCC IS SUBTLE MANEUVERS IS ENCOURAGING DIVISIVE TRENDS WITHIN CELU IN ORDER TO WEAKEN CELU AND MAKE ORGANIZATION MORE PLIABLE TO AFCC DESIRES EXERCISE CONTROL. END SUMMARY.

1. FOR PAST TWO WEEKS INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS HAVE VIRTUALLY COME TO STANDSTILL. CROWDS OF UNEMPLOYED WORKERS (LAID OFF FROM CONSTRUCTION JOBS AND FROM TRANSPORT AND INDUSTRY AFFECTED BY ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN) APPEAR DAILY BEFORE LABOR COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE AND BLOCK ENTRANCE. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES ARRIVING TO ATTEND SESSIONS OF LABOR RELATIONS BOARD (LRB) HAVE BEEN BEATEN UP, AND ON ONE OCCASION EMPLOYER REP WAS HEAVED OVER COMPOUND WALL. ONE ATTEMPT MADE SET FIRE TO BUILDINGS. NOT UNCOMMON FOR LABOR COMMISSIONER TO BE LOCKED INTO HIS OFFICE, AND FREQUENTLY ARMY AND/OR POLICE CALLED IN TO ESCORT OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF LRB OUT OF COMPOUND.

2. FEDERATION OF EMPLOYERS OF ETHIOPIA (FEE) DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER LACK OF DISCIPLINE AND OBSTRUCTION TO WORK OF TRIPARTITE LRB. SELF-APPOINTED LABOR LEADERS APPEAR FREQUENTLY AND PRESENT BLOATED DEMANDS, WITH COMPLETE REFUSAL ACCEPT ANY RESPONSIBILITY. FEE THUS FACES DETERIORATION OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS PROCESSES IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE CELU IN ITS WEAKENED STATE CAN BE OF LITTLE ASSISTANCE.

3. CELU, MEANWHILE, EXPERIENCING INTERNAL POWER STRUGGLE. COMMITTEE OF 15 DISSIDENTS IN ADDIS CELU AFFILIATES, HEADED BY GETACHEW AMARE FROM BESSE CO., HAS SENT LETTER TO AFCC ACCUSING ALEM AND TESFA OF FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH AFCC REQUEST THAT CELU HOLD NEW ELECTIONS IMMEDIATELY. LETTER ALSO ACCUSES MESFIN (NOW ILO OFFICIAL) OF PAST MALPRACTICE WHILE CELU ASSISTANT GENSEC AND HINTS ALL THREE SHOULD BE ARRESTED. ALEM AND TESFA IN TURN HAVE ENDEAVORED MUSTER THEIR SUPPORTERS AND CLAIM THEY CAN RIDE OUT STORM UNTIL REGULAR CELU ELECTIONS ARE CONDUCTED NEXT YEAR. THEY SAY DIRE DAWA AND ASMARA WILL NOT SUPPORT DISSIDENT ADDIS COMMITTEE. RUMORS, HOWEVER, INDICATE POSSIBLE AFCC MANEUVERING TO ENCOURAGE FORMATION SEPARATE COMMITTEE IN EACH OF THREE MAIN CENTERS AND THUS DIVIDE CELU STRENGTH.

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4. WHILE KIALEMBO OF IFCTU WAS IN ADDIS HE TOLD BAURMAN OF ALCC THAT HE HAD DISCOVERED THAT ALEM AND TESFA HAD TURNED BEYENE, FISSEHA AND GHIDEY IN TO AFCC FOR BEING TROUBLEMAKERS IN CELU. THIS INCREDIBLE STORY HAS APPARENNTLY SPREAD AND HAS BECOME BELIEVABLE IN SOME QUARTERS, WHERE DISSIDENT LEADERS USING TALE TO ENHANCE THEIR OWN AMBITIONS. SIMILAR STORY (SOURCE UNKNOWN) HAS IT THAT TESFA IS BEING BLAMED FOR ALLOWING CONDUCT CELU BUSINESS FOLLOWING ARRESTS OF BEYENE

AND OTHERS TO FALL INTO HANDS OF HIS BROTHER, WHO IS SAID
TO HAVE BEEN TRAINED IN RUSSIA.

5. ON OCTOBER 14 SEVERAL HUNDRED UNEMPLOYED WORKERS DEMONSTRATED
BEFORE FOURTH DIVISION HEADQUARTERS CHANTING "WE WANT BREAD ...
WE WANT JOBS." ARMY DISPERSED CROWD, TELLING THEM MEETING ON
JOBS WOULD BE HELD AT CELU BUILDING NEXT DAY. EVEN THOUGH SENIOR
GOVERNMENT AND ARMY OFFICIALS (INCLUDING GEN. AMAN ANDOM
HIMSELF) DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT WIDESPREAD UNEMPLOYMENT, ONLY
AFCC REPRESENTATION AT SUBSEQUENT CROWDED CELU MEETING WAS
SEVERAL TRUCKLOADS OF TROOPS WITH GUNS AT THE READY. CROWD WAS
DISPERSED; THERE WAS NO DISCUSSION ABOUT JOBS. GROUP OF SOME
200 LINGERED ON, AND FINALLY ARMY MAJOR ENTERED CELU BUILDING
AND TOLD REMAINING GROUP THAT ANY FURTHER DEMONSTRATION OF THIS
KIND MIGHT RESULT IN GUNFIRE.

6. DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS FOREGOING INFORMATION TO AALC/NEW YORK.
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